ADVICE
TO THE
CLERGY
Of the DIOCESE of
LINCOLN.

By the Right Reverend Father in God *JAMES* Lord Bishop of that Diocese. Gardiner.

In Order to his Primary *VISITATION.*

LONDON,
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My Brethren,

I Chooſe to take this Method of ſending ſome *Advices* to you before my *Viſitation*, rather than to ſpeak to you on a ſudden at the reſpective places appointed for you to meet at. But becauſe this is a new Method, therefore I think it not improper for me to give you my *Reaſons* for ſo doing; Which are theſe.

I. To make my own Duty and Buſineſs more eaſie to my ſelf, and the better to ſecure my *Health* and *Strength* which otherwiſe might be impaired and weakened in 7 or 8 Weeks travailing together, and performing thoſe Epiſcopal Offices which are requiſite to be performed at the ſeveral places of *Viſitation*, ſo that it may be expected ſome times to happen, that through *wearineſs* or other *indiſpoſition* (the ſeaſon of the Year being uſually hot, and the places of Viſitation many) I may be hindred from ſpeaking ſo much, and ſo fully, as I might otherwiſe be willing and deſirous to do. Beſides, there is one particular *Office*, viz. that of *Confirmation*, which I deſign to take the Opportunity of performing in my paſſage from one place of Viſitation to another, at the great *Towns* that lie in, or not far out of my way, of which I intend to give timely notice of the day and hour, to the Miniſters of ſuch Towns that they may be ready to preſent ſuch Perſons to be confirmed, as are within their own, or their neighbouring Pariſhes, which will take up no little of my time and labour.

II. But I have not regard to my *self* only in this Method, but to *you* also; for by this means some that may be hindred from coming to the place of Visitation, by *Sickness*, or *very Old Age*, or *unavoidable* and *necessary* Business and Attendance elsewhere, may be acquainted with what I think fit to lay before those that are concerned to appear upon these occasions. Where these *Excuses* are *unfeigned*, they are *reasonable* and *sufficient*, and those that are forced to use them, by having this Paper of *Advice* by them, may *see* what I have to propose as well as they might have *heard* it, if it had been *spoken*, and they themselves present But I hope that none, but those that are so *indisposed*, as I now mentioned, will absent themselves.

For as it is the *Duty* of a Bishop to *Visit*, so it is the *Duty* of the Clergy to appear at such *Times* and *Places* where the *Visitation* is appointed. Those *Pretences* that cannot *excuse* a Bishop, before God, and the Church, and his own Conscience, from *Visiting*, can less *excuse* the Clergy of his Diocese from *appearing*. A Bishop may ordinarily alledge his *Age*, and the *Indisposition* that usually attends it, *Debility* of Body and Voice; The hazards of Health by continual motion, it may be, in ill Weather, not conveniently accommodated, and for many Weeks together; so that a Bishop, especially in this Diocese, that would study his *ease* and *health* more than his *obligation*, might colour his Omission by these, and the like Pleas, and satisfie himself with being *quiet* at his own Habitation; But the Clergy of the Diocese, except the very *aged* and *diseased*, cannot in like manner excuse themselves for their Omission; The *weakest* may have Strength enough for one days Journey, without running any hazard, and for the Younger and more healthful, which are the greater Number, they have so little to say in excuse of themselves, that one would be apt to think that their absence proceeded either from Sloth,

Sloth, or Envy, or Prejudice, or, it may be, ſome Sciſmatical or Political Principle, for what elſe can hinder them? Nay, may they not propoſe to themſelves many things that may induce and incourage them to come? They may be preſent at the preaching of a *Sermon* fitted and prepared for the occaſion of their Meeting; They may have an opportunity of ſeeing ſeveral of their diſtant Friends and Acquaintance; They may contract Acquaintance with ſuch as are but newly entred into the Neighbourhood; They may oblige one another in ſtricter Ties of Brotherly Love; They may animate one another in the faithful diſcharge of their Office; They may excite one another's Zeal and Fervency in promoting the ſame common Intereſt of the Chriſtian Religion; They may direct one another in the Knowledge of Modern Books and Treatiſes of Religion; They may enter into combined Reſolutions to defend the *Church* of *England* in its *Doctrine*, *Worſhip*, *and Government*, as it is eſtabliſhed, againſt all Parties that divide from it; They may incourage one another to oppoſe vigorouſly the Vices and the Factions of the Age, and to advance Holineſs and Peace and Submiſſion to Authority; In a word, They may let this *Atheiſtical* and deluded Age ſee that they are unanimouſly bent to maintain the Doctrine, to purſue the Service, and to promote the Honour of the bleſſed Saviour of the World, whoſe Servants they are and whoſe work and buſineſs of reconciling Men to God they have avowedly undertaken; If the Clergy were ſenſible that they might attain to theſe good Ends by meeting their *Dioceſan* at his *Viſitation*, what conſidering Man would abſent himſelf? So that I hope the ſending of this *Advice* to be read, and to lie by you, will be ſo far from hindring you from coming to the Viſitation, that it will rather prevail with you to come; and I hope that the ſerious and deliberate peruſal of it may be of more

Uſe

Uſe and Benefit than a tranſient Diſcourſe; for I have obſerved that ſometimes ſuch Diſcourſes have not been heard by all preſent, either by reaſon of the *weakneſs* of the Speaker's Voice, or the *noiſe* and *talk* which may occaſionally happen; or if they have been heard, they have been ſoon forgotten, ſo that many profitable Inſtructions have been dropt and loſt; whereas, by this way, they may not only be communicated to all, but alſo be preſerved and reviewed upon occaſion.

And now having given you the Motives that induced me to tranſmit theſe *Adviſes* from the Preſs, rather than to mention them at our Meeting, I ſhall proceed to hint ſuch Things, as by your kind and unprejudiced Reception of them, may, with God's bleſſing, make this Viſitation uſeful for the Ends for which it is deſigned.

Which, in General, is to know the State of this Dioceſe, to ſee how all Perſons behave themſelves in it, with reſpect to their ſeveral Duties either as Chriſtians in general, or Miniſters in the Church of Chriſt, or Subjects of the Civil Government. For Epiſcopal Viſitation has an Eye both to the Clergy and * Laity, but principally to the Clergy, to whoſe Cure and Conduct, in order to their eternal Salvation, the * Laity are committed.

* Inſtrument of Inhibition. *Clerum & * Populum.*

This is a vaſt Buſineſs in this large Dioceſe, and requires great diligence, and application of mind; and I have often been much concerned and grieved, that I want that *aſſiſtance*, of which the Conſtitution, and external Regiment and Adminiſtration of this Church has been provided; I mean, The *Aſſiſtance* of *Rural Deans*, which Office is a part of our Conſtitution, and is yet exerciſed in ſome Dioceſes of this Kingdom, but has unhappily been diſuſed in this, (for how long time I know not) to the great loſs and hindrance of Eccleſiaſtical Adminiſtration.

By

By the impartial and diligent Execution of this *Office*, the Biſhop might be eaſed in a great part of that Duty, which is too heavy a Burthen for his own Shoulders; The Ignorant, the Factious, the Scandalous, the Negligent, the Diſſenting, might eaſily be detected in a ſmall *Deanry*; and being ſignified to the Biſhop, or rather firſt of all and immediately to the *Arch-deacon*, might be timely and duely corrected, and reformed; For the Arch-deacon inhabiting within his Arch-deaconry, as it is moſt proper, might eaſily be reſorted to upon occaſion, and ſo Hear and Amend many Faults, which might be brought to him by the *Rural Dean*, without Application to the Biſhop.

If a Biſhop of this extenſive Dioceſe was provided of active and faithful Perſons in the ſeveral *Deanries*, which retain the name yet, his Buſineſs might be manageable, and his Authority and Government uſeful, whereas for want of theſe, no Biſhop here can do ſo much and ſo well as he might be willing and glad to do.

But in the defect of theſe *Aſſiſtances*, it is in your Power, My Brethren, to give me eaſe and ſatisfaction in my weak Endeavours. If you would do what you have declared, and promiſed, and reſolved to do in the preſence of God and the Congregation at your Ordination, it would diſcharge me of a great deal of care and trouble.

Where there is a formed and ſettled Church, as this of the Church of *England* is, with known Rules and Meaſures by which the Clergy are bound to exerciſe their Miniſtry, one would think, if Men were ſincere, they could not fail in performing this part of their duty, for they cannot, or, at leaſt, they need not be ignorant of the Obligations that are laid upon them, by the Laws of the Kingdom, and the Canons of the Church, not to mention here the *Obligations* that they have laid upon themſelves; But it is too true that there is a *Failure* in ſome Perſons as to the diſcharge

charge of those Obligations, which if it be frequent and habitual can proceed from nothing but *Prejudice*, or *Sloath*, or *Inconsideration*, in all which there is a spice of *Insincerity*. I know some will plead want of *Health*, and others an Obligation to officiate in several places for a bare Competency: But one may easily distinguish whether these be the *true* Reasons, or whether their Omissions proceed from other causes; To be sure, they themselves know; I wish their Pretences were always sincere; However the unaccountable *Negligence* of some, and the *Immoralities* of others are the Subjects of the Bishop's *Trouble* and *Inquiry*. If there were none such, a Bishop's Visitation would be easie and comfortable.

It would have been well if such Persons had been stopt at the first *door*, that of *Ordination*, but having been let in there, where the door was too wide, they are the Men that make the greatest disorder and trouble within. If these Men had come so *disposed* and *qualified* into the Ministry of the Church as they professed themselves to be, affirming at their Ordination, that they *trusted they were inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon them the Office and Ministration of Deacons to serve God for the promoting of his Glory and the edifying of his People*; They would behave themselves after another manner; whereas practising so disagreeably to that *Declaration* they made, they give occasion to the World to believe that it was a false and groundless *Presumption*, and a sort of *Lying against the Holy Ghost*; Or else, that if they had had any such good *Motion*, they have *quenched* it since by their unworthy and disagreeable Behaviour.

If such Men would bethink themselves and reflect upon the solemn Profession, Promise, and Vow which they made at their Ordination, it might be a means to revive that holy Fire within them, (if it was ever kindled in their Hearts)

Hearts) which they have ſo heedleſly extinguiſh'd. I would for that reaſon adviſe them frequently and deliberately to read the Offices of Ordaining Deacons and Prieſts, where they may ſee not only their Works laid out and ſet before them, with the *Dignity* and *Uſefulneſs* of it, but alſo the *Obligation* they have laid upon themſelves to perform it, and if there be any *Ingenuity* remaining in them agreeable to their *Liberal* and *Learned* Education, any *ſence* of Goodneſs, any *regard* to the Love of Chriſt and his Church, any *hope* of reward for their due attendance to their Duty, any *fear* of the extreme Puniſhment that will certainly follow upon the neglect of it, it cannot but affect them with *ſhame* and *trouble*, which would awaken within them fervent *Deſires*, and hearty *Reſolutions*, and careful *Endeavours* to diſcharge their Obligations for the future.

And if there be any that have entred into Orders without *feeling*, or *pretending* to feel, any ſuch ſecret *motion* of the Holy Ghoſt, but ſolely for ſecular Ends and Advantages, however they have made a falſe ſtep at their Entrance, they may yet recover themſelves, if by ſerious and timely *conſideration*, and begging the *Aſſiſtance* of the Holy Spirit, (who preſides in, and takes care of the Church of Chriſt, and is ready to Co-operate with thoſe that ſerve the Lord Jeſus in the Work of the Miniſtry) they could be prevailed upon, out of an *hearty* ſenſe of their Duty, to apply themſelves *faithfully* and *diligently* to the practice of it, according to their Natural Faculties and Abilities, the Improvement of which would prevail with God to beſtow more and greater.

In ſhort, the beſt and moſt proper *Diſpoſition* for the work of the Miniſtry in the Church of Chriſt is *Simplicity* and *Sincerity* of Heart. This *Diſpoſition* our Saviour preferred in the Election of His Apoſtles, excepting only one whom he choſe for a particular reaſon. Men thus qualified will

ſerve their Maſter Faithfully in all Circumſtances, and be the outward condition of the Church either *Afflicted* or *Proſperous*, they will be true to the Intereſt of it, *knowing how to be abaſed and how to abound*. If the Church of Chriſt was provided of Miniſters ſo *qualified* in all places, the Viſitation of a Biſhop would be no Burthen either to himſelf or them. It was ſo provided in the firſt Ages after the Apoſtles; And in the ſucceeding Ages, during the time of the *Apoſtacy* to the time of the *Reformation*, this Nation produced not a few Perſons very illuſtrious and eminent in this Character; I ſhall do no wrong to many others to inſtance in one particularly a * Biſhop of this Dioceſs, who amongſt many other excellent Indowments, both natural and acquired, was eſpecially remarkt for *Integrity* and *Probity*; This made him Magnanimous, reſolute, and fervent, in reſiſting and oppugning the corrupt Practiſes of the Court of *Rome*, altho it expoſed him to the neglects and cenſures of that *Court*, notwithſtanding he was the greateſt Man of *Learning* and *Induſtry* in that Age.

* *Robert Groſthead Biſhop of Lincoln.*

The ſame Spirit and Diſpoſition began and carried on the Reformation in the Weſtern parts of Chriſtendom in a wonderful manner, through many difficulties and hazards. It was indeed an happy *Direction* of Providence that at the ſame *juncture*, many of thoſe *upright* and *ſincere* Reformers, were alſo Men of better *Capacity* and better *Learning* than the common Romiſh Clergy; and where *Learning* is joyned with *Integrity* and *Simplicity* there can be no better accompliſhment for the Work of the Miniſtry. The preſent Age abounds with many Helps and Aſſiſtances of Learning, and the Church of *England* is provided of many Clergymen eminently *Learned*; I will not accuſe any of want of *Sincerity*, but I am apt to think, that if that was generally the reigning and governing *Diſpoſition* in the Clergy, there would be leſſer need of Inquiry and Reformation than I doubt there is.

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This would make them *careful* to observe the Vows and Promises they made at their Ordination; This would make Rectors and Vicars *tender* of those *Souls* who are committed to their Cure at their * *Institution*; This would make Curates *Sollicitous* for the Flock with which they are intrusted although they have not Institution; This would restrain all sorts from the immoderate pursuit of *Pluralities*, and reconcile them to *Residence*, making it acceptable and delightful to them; This would ingage all the *Ranks* of the Clergy to be *zealous* and *earnest* in regaining the *Seduced*, and reclaiming the *Vicious*, and improving all. This is that salt which not only preserves the Clergy from Corruption, but also seasons all their Performances. In short, this makes them acceptable to God, and useful to the Church; This therefore is that Grace or Disposition of Mind, which you should beg of God to bestow upon you, and use your greatest Indeavour to acquire; which if you be indowed with, it will appear not only in the Holiness of your Lives as you are *Christians*, but also in the Faithful performance of your Offices as you are *Clergymen* of it, this I shall make evident by instancing in the *Principal* Offices which your Holy *Function* does oblige you to perform.

* Form of institution. *Curam Animarum Parochianorum tibi in Domino committimus.*

The first of which is *Prayer*, by which I mean the *publick Liturgy* of the Church. To this you have promised to *conform*, and subscribed your Hands to that Promise; as also to the 2d of the 3d *Articles* mentioned in the 36 Canon. *That the Book of Common Prayer containeth in it, nothing contrary to the Word of God, and that you your selves will use the Form in the said Book prescribed, in publick Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and none other.* Does he make good these *Subscriptions* who read, the Common Prayer very *seldom*, or not in *order*, or not the *whole*, but only some parts and peices, or if he do read the whole, reads it so *hastily*, or so *slightly* and *awkwardly* as that an impartial Hearer

might be apt to think that he had no good liking to it? Whereas a Man that is *sincere* and in good earnest in this part of Religious Worship would be careful to read it, * leisurely, * plainly and * distinctly well remembring that he addresses himself, as the Mouth and Leader of the Congregation, to that God who knows, and who requires the Heart in all such Services; He would also use his best Endeavour to read with such *proper* and becoming *Tone* and *Accent* as may best excite *attention*, *affection*, and *fervour* in himself and others. There is indeed a natural Indisposition in some Men to all kind of vocal Harmony, even to that which consists only in the *Elevation* and *Depression* of the Voice in proper places and periods; I call them proper, not only with regard to the art of Music, but even to the sence of the Words; But I shall not urge this further than the natural capacity of men will bear; There is certainly a *felicity* in voice and accent, which they ought to make good use of to whom God has given it, and those that want it, can only use their Endeavour to attain to such a degree, as to avoid at least all gross, absurd, and ridiculous pronunciation.

* Q. Eliz. Articles 1559.

But such as do not think this worthy their Labouring after, I am sure they cannot excuse themselves in *neglecting*, *omitting*, or *altering* any part of the publick Offices; And though they read them not with that propriety of Utterance and Accent which may promote attention and devotion, they ought at least to perform the Offices as they are directed and prescribed, for nothing less than this can Answer their Subscription, which will remain in the Bishops Custody as a witness of their *Insincerity*.

This is to be understood not only of the Offices of Morning and Evening Prayer, (which if they could be daily performed in all Parishes would be of great use to breed in Peoples minds a sense of their dependance upon God from day to day) but also all occasional Offices, the Administration

tion of the *Sacraments of Baptiſm and the Lords Supper, Matrimony, the Viſitation of the Sick, and Burial of the Dead.* All theſe ought to be performed *ſeriouſly, ſolemnly,* and *deliberately,* and in the expreſſions and order in which they are directed, which can only ſatisfy the *Conformity* which you have promiſed.

As to one of theſe Offices, that of *publick Baptiſm of Infants,* I muſt adviſe you to uſe your utmoſt Endeavour to prevail with your Pariſhioners to bring their Children to Church to be Baptized, and not feign pretences for having them baptized at their own Houſes; or, if there be a real Danger, and that Sickneſs, *or other need compels them ſo to do*; If the Child live, you muſt not fail to admoniſh them that it is *expedient* (as the Rubrick directs) to bring the Child to Church afterwards. This is a part of that conformity to the *Liturgy* of the Church of *England,* to which you have ſubſcribed.

I ſhall add one Word more upon this Subject, which is the Obſervation of the *Faſts* and *Feaſts* of the Church which are directed in the Books of common Prayer; the neglect of which has proceeded, in ſome places, as much from the Miniſter, as from the People; the Miniſter is to give notice of all ſuch Days, and why is that? But that the People may know that ſuch Days being appointed for the more than *ordinary* Worſhip and Service of God, they ought to forbear their *Labour and Work,* at leaſt at the Hours of Worſhip, and repair to Church, where, if there be no Miniſter to officiate, to what purpoſe ſhould they come? This is an unaccountable Neglect and ſavours of *Inſincerity.*

Now from that part of your Duty which relates to God, as you lead and conduct your Congregation in the Offices of Publick Worſhip, I proceed to that part of your Duty which relates to the *Congregation,* as you are to teach and inſtruct them; And this comprehends *Reading* the Holy Scriptures, *Preaching, Catechiſing, oppoſing all Erroneous and Strange Doctrines contrary to Gods Word, uſing publick and private Monition*

nitions and Exhortations as well to the Sick as to the Poor within your Cures, as need ſhall require, and occaſion be given. As it is in the Offices of the Ordering of Prieſts, to which ſuch as are ordained Prieſts have promiſed *to be ready to do with all faithful Diligence.*

This is the Doctrinal and Inſtructive part of your Duty as it reſpects Men; and the *Rule* of this Performance is the Holy Scriptures; for you have declared at your Ordination that you were *Perſuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain ſufficiently all Doctrine required of neceſſity for Eternal Salvation through Faith in Jeſus Chriſt; and that you were determined out of the ſaid Scriptures to inſtruct the People committed to your Charge, and to teach nothing (as required of neceſſity to Eternal Salvation) but that which you ſhall be perſwaded may be concluded and proved by the Scriptures.* The Miniſters of the Goſpel are the Miniſters of *Revelation*, as were the Prophets under the Law from *Moſes* the great Prophet till the ceaſing of Prophecy; the ſtanding *Revelation* which God has made to mankind is contained in the Scripture, which is therefore called the *Word* of God; and it is our Buſineſs to *Study*, to *Read* and to *Explain* this; I ſay, It is our *Buſineſs* who are the Miniſters of *Revelation* and the *Servants* of Chriſt in the Work of the *Goſpel.*

All Chriſtians indeed are bound to *read* and *underſtand* the Scriptures ſo far as they are capable; but all Chriſtians are not bound to *read* and to *explain* them *publickly* in Chriſtian Aſſemblies; Nay, they are bound not to do it, unleſs they be *ſeparated* and *appointed* thereto by proper Authority; becauſe our Saviour at the firſt Founding and Erecting his Kingdom did *ſeparate* Men for this purpoſe, and did require ſuch a *Separation* to be continued ſo long as his Kingdom ſhould continue upon Earth, it being neceſſary for the uſeful Ends of *Inſtruction*, and *Order*, and *Peace*, and *Edification*, and the *Salvation* of the Souls of Men. Now this *Separation*

tion is made at *Ordination*, by which there is a general Authority or Commission given *to Read* and *to Preach the Gospel*; but not every where, or in all, or in any place, or at any times, or to any Congregation or Society of Christians, as the Ordained Person pleases; this is impracticable; and would occasion great Disorder and Confusion; But it is limited to certain * *Conditions*, of which *Licensing* is one; And this gives me occasion to speak of *Licensing* to Preach, which some Men are prone to censure as an unnecessary Imposition upon the Clergy; and here I shall offer something, first concerning the *Necessity* of Licensing. 2ly, Concerning the *Person* who is to *License*.

1. As to the *Necessity* of Licensing; By the * Canons of 1603. it appears that all *Beneficed Men* were not allowed to be *Preachers*. I take it that *Beneficed Men* are such as have *Institution* to *Benefices*, so that in the Judgment of the *Convocation*, by which that Body of Canons was compiled, *Institution* alone did not Authorize Men to be *Preachers*, But *Preachers* were to be *Licensed*; therefore there is a *Necessity* of Licensing even as to *Beneficed* Men; And though there is not (God be thanked) that *real* Necessity that, it may be, there was at the time of that *Convotation* sitting, there being since then a general increase of *Learning* and *Knowledge*, Yet still there is a *necessity* as to the observation of the Canon, and a great *Expediency*, if it was more used, as to the regulating of *Preaching*, which, within the compass of our own Observation and Experience, has been made an *Instrument*, not only of promoting *Error* in the Church, but also *Sedition* and *Rebellion* in the State.

Now if *Institution* do not authorize *Beneficed* Men to preach in their own *Benefices* unlicensed; so that if neither *Ordination*, nor *Institution* give sufficient Authority to preach, I mean, as to particular Dioceses and Churches, without

* In the office of ordering of Deacons. *If thou be thereto Licensed by the Bishop himself.* In the office of Ordering of Priests. *in the Congregation where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto.*

* Canon XLV. Singuli Beneficiati in Beneficiis suis residentes (dummodo sint legitima Authoritate admissi) per singulos, &c.

Canon XLVI. Omnis Beneficiatus ad Concionandum non admissus, Concionem per Concionatorem legitime approbatum haberi procurabit, &c.

without *Licenſe*, then there is a neceſſity of *Licenſing* all *Preachers*.

But if it ſhould be granted that *Inſtitution* does authorize a Clerk to *Preach*, it can be only in that *Beneſice* to which he is *Inſtituted*, and where he has * *curam Animarum Parochianorum*, not in any part of the Dioceſs or Archdeaconry beſides; and therefore ſtill there is a *neceſſity* of *Licenſing*, to enable Men to *Preach* in other Churches of the Neighbourhood, or in other parts of the Archdeaconry, or Dioceſs, as there may ſometimes be occaſion, by the *Temporary* Supply of other Men's Cures, upon *Abſence*, or *Sickneſs* or *Suſpenſion* of the Incumbent, or *Voydance* by *Reſignation*, *Deprivation* or *Death*, which ſort of Supply an *unlicenſed* Man ought not to undertake. So that it is very evident, that there is a *Neceſſity*, or at leaſt a great Expediency in requiring *Preachers* to be *Licenſed*.

* *Inſtrument of Inſtitution.*

II. As to the Perſon who is to *Licenſe*, it is only the Biſhop of the Dioceſs *himſelf*, in which the *Licenſed* Perſon reſides. This as to *Deacons* ſeems very plain by theſe Words in the Office of *Ordination*, which the Biſhop uſes in the Delivery of the New Teſtament to the *ordained* Perſon. *Take thou Authority to Read the Goſpel in the Church of God, and to Preach the ſame if thou be thereto* Licenſed *by the Biſhop himſelf*. Which I take to be the Biſhop of the Dioceſs where the *ordained* Perſon has a *Title* to officiate; and therefore if a Biſhop of one Dioceſs, by vertue of *Letters Dimiſſory*, ordain a Deacon who has a Title in another Dioceſs, that Biſhop, in whoſe Dioceſs the *Title* is, ought to grant the *Licenſe*, and not the ordaining Biſhop. But that for which I mention this, principally is, That the *Licenſe* is to be granted by the *Biſhop himſelf*, which I take to be *excluſive* of any *Officer* or *Subſtitute*.

And as to *Deacons*, ſo alſo to *Prieſts*, as it ſeems evident by the xxxvi and xxxvii Canons. The xxxvi Canon requires

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Subſcription to the 3 Articles before Ordination. The xxxvii. Canon Requires, that notwithſtanding the general Power given to the ordained Perſon at his *Ordination*, when he comes to Reſide in any Dioceſe, he ſhall not be permitted there to *preach*, &c. unleſs he firſt conſent and ſubſcribe to the ſaid 3 Articles *in the Preſence of the Biſhop of the Dioceſe* wherein he is to *Preach*, &c. It is ſaid in the preſence of the *Biſhop*; It is not ſaid of the *Ordinary*, for ſo the *Chancellour* of the Dioceſs may be, but of the *Biſhop*. This I take notice of that the Clergy may not be impoſed upon, by *falſe*, *inſufficient* and *uncanonical* Licenſes, as I know too many are; And to ſhew the great Care that the Church has taken, that the *Biſhop* of every Dioceſe, may know the *Clergy* of his Dioceſe their *Character* and their *Abilities* to preach, and be ſatisfied of their *Orders* and their *Converſation*, which he cannot be, if Eccleſiaſtical Officers may grant *Licenſes*, eſpecially upon *Sequeſtrations* of vacant Livings, and *Supply* of *Curates* and *Lecturers* at their pleaſure. How can the Biſhop tell whether Men ſo *Licenſed* have Subſcribed to the 3 Articles mentioned in the forecited xxxvi Canon, eſpecially if the *Licenſer* keep no Book of Subſcriptions, or make no Return to the Biſhop of them, as ſome do not? Or indeed, how can the Biſhop tell whether ſuch *Licenſed Men* be ordained, or how they have behaved themſelves in the place of their laſt Reſidence?

Where ſuch Power is aſſumed, any *illiterate*, *corrupt* or *covetous Surrogate* may grant *Licenſes* to unordained, unqualified, and inſufficient Men, and the Biſhop never know it. Many ſmall Livings are held only by *Sequeſtration*; and if the Serving of the Cure, together with the power of Sequeſtring the Profits be granted at the pleaſure of the Surrogate, the Biſhop not knowing, unworthy Men may eaſily get into Curacys, and if they can but ſcreen themſelves at the Times of Viſitation, they may continue undiſcovered.

This is a Practice of very ill *Consequence*; for Preaching the Word of God, comprehending as before-mentioned, is not to be intrusted but to Men well *qualified* for their *Learning* and *Knowledge* in the Holy Scriptures; And the Bishop, who has the first care in this matter, ought to be satisfied that they are so, and particularly of *Curates*, whether they officiate by vertue of *Sequestration* in vacant Livings, or under *Beneficed* Men, who by reason of their *Age* or *Sickness*, or *Necessary* absence, or being possessed of two *Benefices*, stand in need of such *Assistants*.

And now having said thus much as to the *Authority* requisite for publick *Preaching*, and the due and legal Permission of the Exercise of it by the *Bishop himself* in granting *Licenses*; I return to what I hinted concerning the *Subject Matter* to which your *Preaching* is restrained, which is the *Word of God*. This is that *Storehouse* which contains all things necessary to be believed and practised, so that all the *Articles* of *Faith* and all the *Rules* of *Life* and *Practice* are to be drawn from hence. The *Fundamental* Articles ought to be explained carefully and evidently from proper Texts of Scripture, the *Belief* of them being necessary to eternal Salvation; These may be handled conveniently, upon the great *Festivals* and other *Holy Days* in which we celebrate those more illustrious parts of our Saviour's History, of which we profess the Belief as *Christians*; But at all other Seasons the practical Heads of the Christian Religion are the propereſt *Subjects* for the Pulpit, and there is less danger of misunderstanding and misrepresenting these, especially if one read the Scriptures with that *sincere* and *plain* intention of which I have been speaking; otherwise many Expressions there used may be wrested to support *erroneous* Opinions, and countenance *evil* Practises, as we have seen and still see in the present Age. Men bring their *Notions* and *Opinions* with them to the reading of

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the Scriptures, and then they will not fail to find *them* there; and if they think they find *them* there, they presume they may vent *them* openly and confidently, and produce that *Holy Book* to *vindicate* them, out of which it is much easier to *confute* them.

God forbid that we should take that course to Remedy this, which the Church of *Rome* does, by locking up the Bible in a Language unknown to the unlearned, and to prohibit the Reading of it; or that we should draw so wicked an *Inference* from hence, as to *argue*, or but *think*, that because so many *senceless*, *absurd*, and *irrational*, as well as *impious* and *blasphemous* Errors have been pretended to be drawn out of this *Fountain*, that therefore it cannot be the *Word* and Revelation of God, but a corrupt mixture of humane Inventions; No, such men bring their *Poyson* with them, they do not find it there; If they did partake of that *Spirit* by which it was *indited*, they could make no such ill use of it.

Now this being that *Book* which you, *My Brethren*, are authorized to *Read* and to *explain* publickly, you should not only *study* it *diligently*, and with great *caution* and *reverence*, but with the like honest and sincere *Intention* which the holy *Writers* had in penning it, considering the gracious End for which this *Revelation* was made by God, namely to reimplant his *Image* in men, consisting in *Holiness* and *Purity*, which was defaced by *Apostacy*, and rendring them capable of a better and more glorious Immortality than that they have lost. For this purpose the *Law* of God was given, and holy *Prophets* sent into the World, and at last the *Great Prophet* of all, the *Eternal Son of God*, and for this purpose did he Erect his *Kingdom* upon Earth, and appoint *Stewards* and *Officers* to Minister in it; And for this purpose were you *Ordained* and *Separated* that you might carry on that great and charitable Work of Redeeming and Saving Mankind.

The Deliberate Consideration of this would excite in you an *eager* and *fervent* Desire to have as great a Share as you could in this most charitable and God-like Undertaking.

The *Kingdom* of Christ was erected in Opposition to the *Kingdom* of Sathan, who is stiled in Scripture *the Prince of this World*; Your Business is to *Resist* and *Countermine* him, and all his *Stratagems*. This you cannot do but by the faithful Discharge of that Trust which is reposed in you as the *Servants* of Christ in administring and promoting his *Kingdom*.

And here I must charge upon you, That you deliver faithfully the whole *Law* of Christ, by which the *Church* is to be *Instructed*, *Edified* and *Governed*.

The *Laws* of Christ's Kingdom comprehend not only the eternal and immutable *Laws* of *Holiness* and *Righteousness*, but also some *positive* and *ritual* instances which Christ himself *instituted* here upon Earth for the necessary conduct and management of his *Kingdom*. These are the Two *Sacraments* of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*. The first is the Rite of *Initiation* or *Admission* into the Church of Christ. The second is the Rite of *Communion* or *Fellowship* with Christ in his Church, whereby *Baptized* Persons, by the *Distribution* and *Reception* of Bread and Wine, consecrated in Memory of the Death of Christ, are made Partakers of his *Body* and *Blood*.

Both these are great and valuable *Privileges*, and peculiar *Rites* of the *Christian* Religion, and you are intrusted with the *Administration* of them.

These have been most scandalously and prophanely neglected by some that pretend themselves to be the *Ministers* of Christ; especially that of the *Lord's Supper*; for instead of *inviting* and *exhorting* Christians to be Partakers at the *Lord's Table*, they have made it their great Endeavour to *deter* them from it; in which they dealt very *unfaithfully* with the Souls

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of their Hearets; for they vehemently inculcated the Danger of *unworthy Receiving*, without acquainting them with the Danger of not *Receiving* at all; This *Omission* you must be careful to *Supply*, and to set before the People committed to your charge the *Danger* on both hands; for certainly the prophane *Neglect* in not *Receiving*, is as *dangerous* and *damning* as the Receiving *unworthily*; for as they are no *Christians* who are not *baptised* into the Name of Christ, so they are no *good* Christians who neglect to partake of the Body and Blood of Christ in the *Lord's Supper*.

These things you should *Preach* and *Exhort*, and thereby shew your selves faithful to your Lord and Master, who has ordained these Two *Sacraments* to be perpetually used and administred in the Church until his coming again.

For which purpose as there is in every Church a *Font* for *Baptism*, so there is a part of the Church, very convenient and proper, and generally fitted and prepared for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper, which we call the *Chancel*. Here the *Communion-Table* may be placed, and the Communicants *Receive*, with greater *Order*, *Decency* and *Convenience* for Devotion, than in the *Body* of the Church, and the *Seats* there.

I doubt not but you, *My Brethren*, are sensible of this and satisfied in it, finding great *inconvenience* in Consecrating in so strait a place as an *Ally* of the *Church*, and delivering the Bread and Wine in narrow *Seats*, over the Heads, and treading upon the Feet of those that Kneel; When by removing into the *Chancel* at the time of that *Solemnity*, every one may Kneel without disturbance, and receive with easiness, and see the whole Office performed.

This is so *proper* and so *becoming*, that one cannot but wonder, that the Parishioners in any place should be averse to receive the Sacrament in this Order, and that *Rectors* as well *Impropriate* as *Propriate*, should not take more care to fit their *Chancels* for this purpose, but that some lie wholly disused, in more

more naſtie manner than any Cottager of the Pariſh would keep his own Houſe: Others are imployed for keeping School, by reaſon of which, the *Seats*, *Pavement*, and *Windows* are commonly broken and defaced, not to mention other rudeneſſes and undecencies which are not fit to be permitted in a place ſet apart for God's Worſhip.

But the *Reaſon* that ſome give (as I have been informed) why they except againſt the uſe of the *Chancel* at the time of Celebrating the *Lord's Supper*, is ſtill more to be wondred at; They ſay it is *Popery*, and that Miniſters that uſe their Chancels for this office are *Popiſhly* inclined: But why *Popery?* Is it becauſe the *Romiſh* Prieſts before the Reformation made uſe of the *Chancel* to ſay *Maſs?* So they uſed the Body of the Church to perform other parts of the *Popiſh* Service, and for that Reaſon they may as well except againſt the uſe of the *Church* for Reading the Scriptures and Preaching, as againſt the uſe of the Chancel for Adminiſtring the Communion; and there want not thoſe who carry the Argument ſo far as to cry down the uſe of *Churches* in general; But how weak and how unreaſonable is this? What if the *Popiſh* Prieſt ſaid *Maſs* at the Altar in the *Chancel*, may not the Miniſters of the Church of *England* for that reaſon perform the *Communion* Service there without the Imputation of *Popery?* If there be any *Popery* it muſt be in the *Communion Office*, and if that have any thing of *Popery* in it, why do they receive the Communion in the *Church?* If it have not, why may they not receive it in the *Chancel?* For there cannot be *Popery* in the *Fabrick*, nor in the *Seats*, or *Table*; it muſt be in the *Office*, or no where; and one may ſafely affirm that no Man can prove it to be there.

But the uſe of the *Chancel* for the Communion Service is ſo far from being *Popery*, that the *Papiſts*, and *Popiſh Impropriators* in *England* permit the *Chancel*, where they are concerned

concerned, to lie the most disorderly and ruinous of any other, as I my self have seen in several places; they are not careful to *repair* or *clean* them; nor can they be brought to contribute to the *Reparation* of Churches, but by meer compulsion, and they would be well enough satisfied to see all the *Chancels* and *Churches* in *England* lye in *Ruin*, for this would be the most certain way to overthrow the *Reformation* and bring in *Popery*, which being planted again by *Authority* would sooner oblige that Party to rebuild the *Churches*. This I thought not improper to mention, concerning this matter, upon this occasion.

But to return to *Preaching*; under this Head I comprise *Catechising*, which was an early Practise in the Church of Christ, and of great use for the Instructing of the younger sort, and prepare them thereby both for *Confirmation*, and Receiving the *Holy Communion*. If you consult the LIX. Canon, you will see that you are bound to this Duty of *Catechising*, under the Censures of sharp *Reproof* first; and upon willingly affending again of *Suspension*; and upon the contemptuous continuance in the neglect of it, of *Excommunication*. So careful and so concerned has the *Church* been in this method of *Instruction* or *Preaching*.

But a *sincere* and well-designing Man would chearfully discharge this Duty though there was no Ecclesiastical *Censure* to inforce it; for he would consider that as the time of *Youth* is the most proper time to begin *Instruction*, so *Catechising* is the most *proper* way to *instruct* them in *Religion*; It is the Age in which they learn Arts and Sciences, and how do they learn them, but by the frequent and familiar *Instructions* of their Masters, *examining*, *repeating*, *inculcating*, and *explaining*, as there is occasion and capacity for it? After the same manner must they be taught the *Principles* of Religion which are contained in the *Catechism*; It is not sufficient that they *Repeat* the Words by Heart, but they

they ſhould be taught the *meaning* alſo; and this cannot be done but by explaining the ſeveral Heads more copiouſly, and in the moſt eaſie and familiar manner; And he that is ſenſible of this, and of the Duty that he owes to the *Children* of his Pariſh, as well as to the *elder* ſort, would no more fail to *Catechiſe* than he would to *Preach*; for he knows that he ought to Feed as well with *Milk*, as with *ſtrong Meat*, and as a Faithful Steward, to give the *Children*, as well as the reſt of the Family their proper and * proportionable Diet.

* Portion. Luk. 12. 42.

And here I may fitly take occaſion to acquaint you, That I would not willingly *Confirm* any Children but ſuch as have been Inſtructed in the fore-mentioned manner, and ſuch as you your ſelves believe to have a *competent* Knowledge of the *Principles* of Chriſtianity; This Knowledge muſt not be meaſured by their *Age*, nor by their *ready utterance* of the Words of the Catechiſm, but by their *capacity* and *ability* to anſwer ſuch Queſtions, and to render ſuch an account of their Faith, as, you may hope, proceeds from a right Apprehenſion, and true Underſtanding of the *Senſe* of the Catechiſm. And therefore I muſt earneſtly deſire you to take more than ordinary Pains, before the times of *Confirmation*, and that not only in the *Church*, but, if need be, at your own *Houſes* alſo, to *examine* and *inſtruct* the riper ſort, that they may know what they are to do, and what they undertake at their *Confirmation*; and to give me a Note of the *Names* of ſuch as are ſo qualified and prepared; and for the younger and more ignorant, it is beſt to adviſe them to ſtay till another opportunity.

There are other ways and methods of *Preaching*, (as it may in a general Senſe be called) namely, private *Exhortation* and *Admonition*; Reſolving *Doubts and Caſes* of Conſcience; *Comforting* the afflicted; Furniſhing the Poor with *Bibles* and other good *Books*; directing the Richer ſort what *Books* to provide for their own uſe, and the uſe

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of their Families, of which (God be thanked) this Age has produced many; Giving, or Lending to all ſorts of *Diſſenters* (there being no other way of preaching to them) ſuch *Books* as have been written on purpoſe to prevail with them to return to the Communion of this Church; particularly the *Quakers*, whoſe groſs *Errors* and *Blaſphemys* have been *detected* and *confuted* ſo plainly by a late learned * Writer, that if they be ſo ſincere as they generally pretend, they will be obliged to *renounce* them. Not that this can be expected from the *Leaders* of that Party; they have Ends to ſerve in the Conduct of that deluded People that will ingage them to *adhere*; notwithſtanding Confutation and Conviction too; But I hope the Simple and well-meaning may be brought to ſee their Errors, and forſake them, if the *(b) Books* of this Author were put into their hands, and that they could be prevailed with to read them, or to hear them read.

* Author of the Snake in the Graſs.

b Satan diſrob'd.
b Inſtitution of Water-Baptiſm.

Before I leave this Head of *Preaching* I muſt remind you of a particular *opportunity* you have, and a very *advantageous* one, of performing ſome parts of this Duty; which is, at the *Viſitation of the Sick*; for which there is a particular *Office* appointed; In this, the *Exhortation* is very *proper* and *ſerious*, and the *Collects* very affecting; and if it be performed whileſt the Sick Perſon is capable of *hearing*, *underſtanding*, and *joyning* in it, may be of great uſe and Benefit; But either the Sick Perſon or the Relations are generally too negligent in giving *timely* notice, ſo that it has not always that good Effect which otherwiſe it might; But when it is known that People are ſick, they ought diligently to be *viſited*, that when they have leaſt *abilitiy* of their own, by reaſon of their Weakneſs or Pain, or fear of Death, or puniſhment after Death, they may be *ſuccoured* and *aſſiſted* by the help of others; This is the time when the Devil, the malicious and watchful

Enemy of our Salvation, has great opportunity of tempting and deceiving Men, either by *Presumption* or *Despair*; this therefore is an apt time for you to *resist* him, and to rescue the Souls committed to your Care under so great a Danger; Besides, this *Office* duly performed may be of good use not only to sick and dying Persons, but also to Relations and Visitors, who may happen to be present, and to the Minister himself; who, if he have a serious Sence of things cannot but improve himself in discoursing with Persons in that condition; upon all which accounts this *Office* ought not to be neglected.

And here I conclude what I thought fit to say concerning *Preaching*, which if you would pursue thorough all the forementioned instances of it, with a *sincere* and honest heart, and a fervent desire of doing all the good you can, you would contribute to the upholding of the Kingdom of Christ in this Age of Atheism, Infidelity, and Licentiousness.

I shall now consider one other *Office* with which you are intrusted as you are *Ministers* of the Church of *England*, in which you are highly concerned to be *faithful*, and that is the *Office* of *Matrimony*. I am sorry there are so many in this *Church*, and some in this *Diocese*, who abuse their Trust in this Matter. It is so presumptuous, and so perfidious a practice, that it cannot be censured too severely. Such as can be tempted for a little Summ of Money, or a great one, to marry any Persons that resort to them, without the *Publication* of *Banns*, or *License* duly obtained, or with Licence at *uncanonical Hours*, and in a *Clandestine* Manner, either in their own Houses, or in their Churches, are not fit to be intrusted with such a Power; They do an *illegal* and *uncanonical* Act knowingly and willfully, which they that have any sence of their Character, and Trust, and Duty to their Superiours, would not do: Especially, such

ſuch as dare preſume to marry thoſe whom they *know*, or have reaſon *vehemently* to *ſuſpect* to be either *ſtolen*, or not to have the conſent of Parents, Guardians, or Friends; Theſe are the *Peſts* and *Shame* of our *Profeſſion*; Their Greedineſs of Profit has debauched their Conſciences, and they have no feeling of their own Wickedneſs, nor any regard to the many evil Conſequences that attend this practice; as, the Ruine of the *Branches* of *Noble Familys*; Diſquieting *Parents* and *Relatives*, and alienating their Affections; Incouraging *Diſobedience* in Children; and that which is indeed the leaſt to be lamented, expoſing themſelves to Ignominy, Contempt and Puniſhment; not to mention, what has ſometimes happened, *legitimating*, as much as in them lyes, *Inceſtuous* Mixtures. One would think that no conſidering Man of Conſcience and Probity, could be prevailed upon for a preſent Benefit to drive on ſuch a *pernicious* and *diſhonourable* Trade, and perſiſt in it, with deſyance of all *Admonition*, *Cenſure*, and *Puniſhment*. This I could not forbear to ſay out of that juſt Indignation I have to this moſt *treacherous* and *impudent* Practiſe.

Thus having ſhewed you how *ſincerity* of Heart, which is that *Qualification* which our Saviour preferred in chooſing his *Apoſtles*, would diſpoſe you to the due and regular performance of all the Offices of your Holy Function; I ſhall now ſhew you how neceſſary this *Qualification* is for the Conduct of your *Lives* and *Converſations*.

Sincerity would ingage us to live agreeably to our *Doctrine*; which if we do not, our *Preaching* would be little regarded, ſo that our Miniſtry would be in a great meaſure ineffectual, and unprofitable. Men that behold the *evil* Converſation even of *good* Preachers, will be apt to ſay that either they do not *believe* the Doctrine *they preach*, or that the *Practice* of it is not ſo neceſſary to Salvation as they

represent it; for they that press an holy *Conversation* upon others, in order to the *saving* of their *Soules*, one would think, if they meant sincerely, would not be negligent, by the same way, to *save* their *own*; so that they must necessarily fall under the censure of being either *unfaithful* Guides, or *insincere* Believers.

Those keene Expostulations of St. *Paul* directed to the Judaizing Christians at *Rome*, as they could not fail to *convince*, or *confound* those Offenders, so they and others of the like nature, may be made use of to the same purpose, to such Preachers of the Gospel, as walk not according to the Gospel. *Romans* 2d. 21. *Thou that teacheſt another, teacheſt thou not thy ſelf? Thou that preacheſt a man ſhould not ſteal, doeſt thou ſteal? Thou that ſayeſt a man ſhould not commit Adultery, doeſt thou commit Adultery? Thou that abhorreſt Idols, doeſt thou commit Sacriledge?* So St. *Paul*. To which, if we add, Thou that preacheſt the Laws of *Purity*, and *Temperance*, and *Righteouſneſs*, and *Peace*, and *Charity*, and *Humility*, and *Patience*, and *Obedience*, &c. Art thou guilty of *Uncleanneſs*, or *Exceſs*, or *Injuſtice*, or *Covetouſneſs*, or *Contention*, or *Pride*, or *Reſiſtance* of Authority? What Reply could the Offenders make? If they do not preach theſe Doctrines, they neglect to *inſtruct* Men in their Duty; and if they doe preach them, and doe not lead their Lives accordingly, they fail in their *Practiſe*; So that they who miniſter in *holy* things, and lead *unholy* Lives, are the moſt *ſelf-convicted* and *ſelf-condemn'd* Men in the World; They have nothing to ſay for themſelves, becauſe they do not onely *know* their Duty, but *perſuade* to the Practiſe of it, and yet doe not *practiſe* it themſelves. They *Reprehend* thoſe Vices in others, in which they *indulge* themſelves. They tell Men they ſhall be *damned* for *committing* thoſe *Sins* which they themſelves *commit*. How *inconſiſtent*, how *inſincere*, and *unſatisfactorie* is this?

But

But this is not all; The Ministers of Christ are bound not onely to live according to the Laws of Christianity in general; But they have a Law of their own, a Law *peculiar* to the Officers of Christ's Kingdom, by which they are obliged to a *strictness* and *decorum* suitable to that *Relation*. St. *Paul* has described the Particulars in his Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, and accasionally in other places, as St *Peter* also has done. There you may see by what *measures* you are to govern your *selves*, and your *Familys*, with respect to your Office and Character: These indeed, were Men of the highest *Station* and *Authority* in the Church, but the *Inferiour* and *Subordinate* as well as the *Superiour* are mentioned and described, and the Rules are much the same for both. I shall not need to transcribe them; it is a *Mirroir* you have in your own hands, and you may look daily into it, and compose your *Conversations* by it.

If I would single any *Particulars* of those many Offences, which the Ministers of the Gospel of all Ranks are there directed to avoid, it should be those of publick *Scandal*; not that these are in their own Nature Sins of greater *Malignity* than some others there mentioned, but that the *Consequences* may be worse, and the *Ignominy* greater.

As for instance, *Intemperance*, which is one of the *perticulars* mentioned by * St. *Paul*, as it is a Sin that discovers it self more openly than many others, so there is no other that renders a Clergyman more *ridiculous* and *contemptible*, for which reason, if no other, it ought carefully to be avoided; But it infects the Neighbourhood too, and they that like it are the more incouraged to practise it by the *example* and *conversation* of their Preacher, which increases the *Scandall*. But though the *Scandall* be very great where the Guilt is manifest, and that the Offenders cannot be too severely censured, yet if they be but few, as

* Tim. 1. 3 c. and 8 ver. μὴ πάροινον μὴ πλήκτην προσόχοντας.

I hope they are not many, in compariſon of the great Body of the Clergy, the whole ought not to be reproached for the misbehaviour of thoſe few; Let the *Scandall* lye in its own place, and there let the Offenders be puniſhed by all the Penaltys *Eccleſiaſtical* and *Civil*; But God forbid that the *innocent* ſhould ſuffer with the *guilty*, as they do too often, by the uncharitable and malicious *hints*, *Suggeſtions*, and groundleſs *Storys* of thoſe that are their Enemys, becauſe they demand their Dues, and *tell them the Truth*; An apparent offence of this nature in one Man has been known to occaſion the cenſure of many, eſpecially of thoſe who do not abridge themſelves the *freedome* of Converſation with one another, being not conſcious to themſelves of any unworthy *deſigne* or *practice* by ſuch Converſation; and yet even in this it muſt be ſaid, that there is regard to be had to *time* and *place* and other *Circumſtances*; ſo *ſtrict* and *nice* are the *meaſures*, by which the Clergy are to govern themſelves.

* Tim. 3. 8. μὴ αἰσχροκερδεῖς

If I ſhould inſtance in another ſcandalous Sinne mentioned by St. *Paul*, which is * *Covetouſneſs*, I know I ſhould gratify ſome Men who are apt to accuſe the *Clergy* too commonly in this Matter; but very unjuſtly; for I think I may truely ſay that there is no *Profeſſion* of Men, or at leaſt I know not any, that, in the common Body of them, are freer from this Sin then the *Clergy* are; inſomuch, that the greater number of them, it may be, ſtand in need of Advice to be more *provident*, *conſidering their ſmall* Incomes, *and the great Payments* with which they are *conſtantly* burthened, and at ſome times *unjuſtly* oppreſſed; But true it is, that all cannot be excuſed, and it muſt needs be ſaid, that ſuch as are *really* guilty in this matter, are highly *ſcandalous*. How *unbecoming* and *reproachful* is it for thoſe who ought, above all others, to have their *Converſation in Heaven*, as being the Preachers of that Doctrine, which was revealed

vealed from *Heaven*, and leads to *Heaven*, and that expect their Rewards for ſo Preaching in *Heaven*, to *mind earthly things* immoderately, and ſtudy and practiſe that *Wiſdom which is earthly*? Such as they that are *inſatiably* greedy in acquiring and heaping up Preferments, or *ſordid* and *penurious* in the uſe of thoſe they injoy, or incumber themſelves with the *ſecular* Affairs of other Perſons, imploying a great part of their *tyme* and *labour* in *worldly* Concernments, which ſhould be imployed in the proper Buſineſs of their Function.

And here I cannot but take notice of one Inſtance of *Covetouſneſs* which I take to be very *unworthy* and *ſcandalous*, which is not allowing *Curates* a meet and competent Maintenance agreeable to their *Education*, *Character*, and the occaſion of their *Expences*. What a *vile* and *ſordid* thing is it for Men of *great* Preferments to *cheapen* Curates, and contract with them for 20, or 25, or 30 *l. per ann.* (for they ſeldom exceed that proportion, calling it a *Competency*) when according to the value of their Eccleſiaſtical Incomes they might make it *double* to that? Then they might be provided of more *ſufficient* Curates then ſome of them are. This is a very *ſcandalous* Practiſe, and makes *ſcandalous* Curates.

I ſhall not proceed to inſtance in any other particulars of *Scandall*, theſe 2 of *Intemperance* and *Worldlymindedneſs* being the moſt *ſcandalous*, as being the moſt *expoſed* and *viſible* where they are practiſed.

But though the *Scandall* in both be very great, the *Scandalous* are not ſo numerous as ſome ill-principled and evil-minded People, who are prone to *cenſure* at randome, would repreſent them to be. God be thanked that it may be affirmed truely, that the *Clergy* of the *Church of England* in general, are not only good Preachers, but ſincere and good Men, and the *freedome* which ſome are apt

to

to accuſe them of proceeds not from *vicious* Inclinations but from an abhorrence of *Hypocriſy*.

I ſhall add no more to what I have ſaid concerning your *Behaviour*, and *Converſation*, but onely this, that though the *Rules* be *more*, and *ſtricter* relating to the *Clergy*, than to *Chriſtians* in general, yet thoſe that are *ſincere* will make it their Endeavour to live up to them; *Sincerity* being a Principle that will not permit a Man to *ſhift off* any Duty, whether *active* or *paſſive*, though never ſo *hard*, which is laid upon him by God, or which he lays upon himſelf; for which reaſon, as I told you at the beginning, our Saviour made choice of honeſt upright Men, as the moſt ſuitably qualified to be the *Officers* of his Kingdom.

And here it may not be improper to ſuggeſt to you, That this Principle of Sincerity would prevent a great many *Failings* and *misbecoming* Practices in ſome of the *Clergy*, which though they ſeem not of ſo great *Malignity* as thoſe I have mentioned, yet ought to be taken notice of, and regulated,

One is concerning the ſubſcribing *Teſtimonials* of ſuch as apply themſelves for Orders or Inſtitutions, in which, to my *own* Knowledg, ſome of the Clergy of *this Dioceſe* have been too eaſie; and though they may call it *Charity*, it is a great miſtake; for by this means the Biſhop, who can know nothing of the Converſation of Men, but by the *Teſtimony* of thoſe who do know, is often *deceived*, and ſo unworthy Men creep into Orders, to the diſhonour of their *holy* Profeſſion; which indeed is to be charged upon the *unfaithfulneſs* of thoſe that ſet their hands to *Teſtimonials*, either *blindly*, having no knowledg of the Perſon; or *falſly*, knowing that he is not worthy of the Character they give of him.

To which may be added that of granting *insufficient*, *uncanonical*, and *false Titles* to Curates, when those that grant them never intend to imploy them as *Curates*, or to contribute to their *Maintenance*, but only to give them an opportunity of entring into *Orders*, and then let them *shift* for themselves; and indeed this has occasioned a great deal of *shifting*, some being forced to take up with *mean* and *poor* conditions and ways of Livelihood, and others wandring about for Imployment, and even craveing *Charity*, to the great contempt and dishonour of their Profession.

Another *Failing* I shall instance in, is the not *Repairing* timely, the *Chancels* and *Buildings* belonging to *Rectorys* and *Vicarages*; by reason of which Neglect such Buildings become so *dilapidated* that the yearly *Profits* of the Benefice cannot suffice for the Charges of the *Reparation*; and that which renders this neglect more *mischievous*, is, that such Dilapidators many times die insolvent, and so leave the whole *Burden* of the Repair upon the *Successour*; which if he undertake to do substantially, as he ought, he must live very *inconveniently* in the mean time. Now what *honesty* is there in this for a Man to injoy the whole *Profits* of a Benefice, it may be, for many years, and by neglecting to *repaire* the Edifices belonging to it, leave an unsupportable Charge to a *Successor* who must be forced to expend Moneys in repairing before he receive any *Profits*?

The like *Prejudice* happens to Successors in another instance, in which many Clergymen are *culpable*; which is the neglect of paying *Tenths*, *Pensions*, *Procurations*, and other *Duties* chargeable upon their *Preferments*. I am sensible that the Clergy cannot receive their own Dues in some places, though they proceed fairly and legally to recover them. Many *delays* and *evasions* are used in this case; however, they cannot answer the *neglect* of paying the forementioned Dues, both as it is a *Christian* Duty to *render to*

all their Dues, and as they are lyable by the neglect to very great Penalties.

I have been much troubled to obſerve ſo great an *Arrear* of Tenths in this Dioceſe, where it is my Duty to collect them. It is my earneſt Deſire that for your own *Intereſt* and *Reputation* you would haſten the payment of the preſent *Arrear*, for which purpoſe I ſhall appoint one in my Viſitation to receive them, and give Acquittances, which may be of ſome eaſe to you; and for the future, I muſt adviſe you to make more *timely* and *punctual* payment. The neglect of this has run ſome Benefices into ſo great an *Arrear*, that Clergymen are diſcouraged from taking *Inſtitution* to them, ſo that they continue ſeveral Years under *Sequeſtration*, in which ſtate, the *Church* and other *Buildings* become *dilapidated*, the *Tythe* in a great meaſure unpaid and loſt, the *Gleab* untilled and purloyned, the Patrons *Right of Preſenting* extinguiſhed, and the Benefice at laſt turned into a *fine cure*. So great a miſchief has been occaſioned, only by the neglect of paying *Tenths* in due time. *Care* and *Honeſty* would have prevented this.

Another Neglect, with which I ſhall conclude, is that of *not Reſiding* upon Benefices; which is an Omiſſion of very ill *Conſequence*, and occaſions great *Complaint*. Not only the Canons of *General Councells*, but the *Provincial* Canons allowed in this Kingdom, are very *ſtrict* in this Caſe, and where they are not altered or limited by *Statute* Law remain in force, according to the Opinion of many Learned *Divines* and *Lawyers*, though ſome are of another Opinion; and the xli *Canon* of the *Convocation* in 1603, though it ſuppoſes Licenſes of *Diſpenſation*, for the keeping of *more* Benefices with cure than *one*, yet it ordains many *Reſtrictions* and *Limitations*, which, if they were duely obſerved, would prevent many of thoſe ill Conſequences and Complaints of *non-reſidence*; But Men have found out *Evaſions* for

for these *Restrictions*, with which, however they may *satisfy* themselves, they do not *satisfie* the plain design and meaning of the *Canon*, and *Sincerity* would Remedy the neglect if the *Law* cannot.

I have now no more to add, but only to desire you favourably to receive these *Advices* which proceed from that *honest* and *sincere* Intention, which I have here *recommended*; And I beseech Almighty God so to *impress* them upon your Hearts, that I may see a good *Effect* of them. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

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